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SUBJECT Views of Otto Muechke

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1. Otto Muechke complained to Senenov about the way the SED made propaganda for the plebiscite in the GDR. To some of his assistants he said that the procedure applied for this plebiscite compromised the secrecy of voting. This development was particularly serious in view of the general elections scheduled to be held in the fall of 1954. Muechke voiced the opinion that these elections would not be a real test of the relative strength of parties in the GDR if these elections were carried out along the lines of the plebiscite. He said that he had protested against this procedure before the Council of Ministers; his protest had, however, not been heeded.
2. Muechke also stated that Senenov was no longer the ultimate authority in East Germany because Ulbricht and Grotewohl more and more claimed the right of sovereignty. The increased authority of the GDR Government forced Senenov to bring his influence to bear through channels of the Moscow party apparatus. Naturally, this procedure could only be applied when Soviet interests were endangered by SED policies.

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